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**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**



**OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY MAYOR FOR  
CHILDREN, YOUTH, FAMILIES AND ELDERS**

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TESTIMONY OF  
**BRENDA DONALD WALKER**  
DEPUTY MAYOR

***HOMELESSNESS NO MORE IMPLEMENTATION***

COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES  
ADRIAN FENTY, CHAIRPERSON

JANUARY 31, 2006

Council Chambers  
John A. Wilson Building  
1350 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20004  
2:00 P.M.

GOOD AFTERNOON CHAIRPERSON FENTY AND MEMBERS ON THE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES, IT IS MY PLEASURE TO JOIN YOU THIS AFTERNOON TO DISCUSS *HOMELESS NO MORE*, THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA'S TEN YEAR PLAN TO END HOMELESSNESS. I AM BRENDA DONALD WALKER, DEPUTY MAYOR FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH, FAMILIES and ELDERS. I APPRECIATE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO UPDATE THE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF *HOMELESS NO MORE*.

BEFORE I DISCUSS WHERE WE ARE TODAY, I THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE HELPFUL TO BRIEFLY DISCUSS THE ORIGIN OF THE *HOMELESS NO MORE* INITIATIVE. THE INITIATIVE EMERGED FROM MAYOR WILLIAMS' RECOGNITION OF THE CRISIS FACING HOMELESS AND VERY LOW INCOME INDIVIDUALS IN ACCESSING AFFORDABLE HOUSING. AS EVIDENCE OF HIS COMMITMENT TO AMELIORATING THE SITUATION, HE ENGAGED A BROAD SPECTRUM OF CITY AND BUSINESS LEADERS, HOMELESS PROVIDERS, ADVOCATES, AND HOMELESS PEOPLE IN A FOCUS GROUP TO SET GOALS. SHORTLY THEREAFTER, THE DISTRICT WAS SELECTED TO PARTICIPATE IN A FEDERAL POLICY ACADEMY ON IMPROVING ACCESS TO MAINSTREAM SERVICES FOR PEOPLE EXPERIENCING CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS. A 17-PERSON TEAM WAS APPOINTED UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF THE DEPUTY MAYOR'S OFFICE; IT WAS COMPRISED OF THE DIRECTORS OF THE

RELEVANT AGENCIES, AS WELL AS KEY SERVICE PROVIDERS. THIS GROUP, NOW CALLED “MPACT” (MAYOR’S POLICY ACADEMY TEAM) DEVELOPED A TEN YEAR PLAN TO END HOMELESSNESS THAT WAS CIRCULATED, VETTED AND FINALLY RELEASED BY MAYOR WILLIAMS IN JANUARY 2005.

AND SO A YEAR AFTER ITS RELEASE, WHERE ARE WE WITH OUR PLAN TO END HOMELESSNESS BY 2014? WE HAVE TAKEN THE THREE UNDERGIRDING PRINCIPLES OF THE PLAN:

- 1) INCREASING THE GOVERNMENT’S HOMELESS PREVENTION EFFORTS;
- 2) DEVELOPING AND/OR SUBSIDIZING AT LEAST 6,000 NET ADDITIONAL UNITS OF AFFORDABLE PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING;
- 3) PROVIDING FULLY COORDINATED WRAPAROUND MAINSTREAM SUPPORTIVE SERVICES WITH CONTINUUM OF CARE PROGRAMS AND SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING ;

AND HAVE BEGUN IMPLEMENTING THEM THROUGH EIGHT *HOMELESS NO MORE* SIGNATURE STRATEGIES. THE STRATEGIES ARE:

1. COORDINATION OF CARE;
2. REDESIGN OF THE FAMILY SYSTEM;

3. CONSOLIDATE HOUSING AND SERVICES RESOURCES TO BRING ON LINE 600 UNITS OF AFFORDABLE PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING ON LINE DURING FY2006;
4. TRANSITION HOMELESS PERSONS TO WORK THROUGH EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMS;
5. DECREASE ADDICTION AMONG HOMELESS POPULATION;
6. IMPROVE ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES;
7. IMPLEMENT DISCHARGE PLANNING TO PREVENT HOMELESSNESS; AND
8. DESIGNATE *HOMELESS NO MORE* IMPLEMENTATION AS A DISTRICT-WIDE POLICY PRIORITY FOR FY'08 AGENCY BUDGETS.

THESE STRATEGIES ALREADY ARE BEING IMPLEMENTED AND REFLECT NOT ONLY OUR COLLECTIVE IDEAS, BUT ALSO BEST PRACTICES AND OUR EXPERIENCE IN HOW BEST TO SERVE PEOPLE WITH MULTIPLE NEEDS.

### **COORDINATED CARE**

THIS STRATEGY HAS THREE KEY ASPECTS. FIRST, OUR EXPERIENCE OF AIDING HURRICANE KATRINA EVACUEES IS BEING LEVERAGED TO PULL TOGETHER INTEGRATED SERVICE TEAMS TO PROVIDE AND COORDINATE MULTIPLE SERVICES FOR HOMELESS PERSONS. HOMELESS SHELTERS ALSO ARE BEING TRANSFORMED INTO HOMELESSNESS ASSISTANCE CENTERS (“HAC’S) WHERE PUBLIC MAINSTREAM AGENCY SERVICES WILL

BE CO-LOCATED. WE ALREADY HAVE CREATED A HAC AT OUR NEW YORK AVENUE FACILITY, WHICH WE PLAN TO EXPAND AND REPLICATE AT OTHER SITES. COORDINATED CARE IS PROVIDED AT HAC'S BY THE DEPARTMENTS OF HEALTH, EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, MENTAL HEALTH, AND HUMAN SERVICES, UNITY HEALTH CARE, THE OFFICE OF VETERAN'S AFFAIRS -- ALL ON SITE AT THE FACILITY.

IN TANDEM WITH THE CO-LOCATED SERVICES, WE WILL HOLD *HOMELESS NO MORE* SERVICE FAIRS ON A REGULAR BASIS. THE FIRST FAIR WAS CONDUCTED AT DC VILLAGE ON DECEMBER 17, 2005, AND WAS DIRECTED TO HOMELESS FAMILIES IN THE DC VILLAGE, DC GENERAL, VALLEY PLACE, AND COMMUNITY OF HOPE SHELTERS. THESE SERVICES FAIRS ENSURE THE DIRECT PROVISION OF SERVICES OR CONNECTION TO PROVIDERS, VOLUNTEERS AND OTHER RESOURCES.

THIS SUCCESSFUL SERVICE FAIR MODEL WILL BE REPLICATED IN FEBRUARY FOR RESIDENTS OF THE SINGLES SHELTERS AND AGAIN IN MARCH FOR UNACCOMPANIED YOUTH. THEREAFTER THE FAIRS WILL BE HELD ON A QUARTERLY BASIS, WITH MAGNET THEMES.

A SECOND KEY ASPECT OF COORDINATED CARE IS THE PROVISION OF INTEGRATED SERVICES TEAMS TO PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE ASSISTANCE TO HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES -- KEY ELEMENTS

OF WHICH ALREADY ARE IN OPERATION. FOR EXAMPLE, DMH'S PATHWAYS TO HOUSING/ CHRONIC HOMELESS INITIATIVE PROVIDES SUPPORTIVE SERVICES VIA AN ASSERTIVE COMMUNITY TREATMENT TEAM FOR A "HOUSING FIRST" APPROACH THAT TARGETS CHRONICALLY HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS LIVING ON THE STREETS. THIS PROGRAM, WHICH CAN HOUSE UP TO 40 PERSONS ANNUALLY, USES SECTION 8 VOUCHERS AND SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PROGRAM AND SHELTER PLUS CARE HOUSING SUBSIDIES. THIS YEAR THE PROGRAM WILL EXPAND TO 24 MORE CLIENTS WITH A NEW SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PROGRAM GRANT.

INTEGRATED SERVICES DEVOTED TO SERVICES TO HOMELESS FAMILIES ALSO ARE AVAILABLE THROUGH THE COMMUNITY CARE GRANT AND THE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP/CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AGENCY'S COLLABORATIVE AGREEMENT. THIS PROGRAM – NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED AS A BEST PRACTICE -- PROVIDES RAPID HOUSING THROUGH A LINKAGE BETWEEN HOUSING AND SERVICE DOLLARS MANAGED BY THE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP AND CASE MANAGEMENT AND LANDLORD RELATIONS FROM THE FAMILY SUPPORT COLLABORATIVES. THIS INITIATIVE OPERATES AS A DIVERSION/PREVENTION PROGRAM AND CAN PROVIDE AN EXIT STRATEGY FOR FAMILIES ALREADY IN SHELTER. IN ON THE COMMUNITY CARE GRANT MODEL, THE CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AGENCY AND THE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP ARE PROVIDING HOUSING AND CASE MANAGEMENT TO PREVENT HOMELESSNESS AND

PROVIDE EARLY INTERVENTION TO CHILDREN AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS.

THE THIRD ASPECT OF THE COORDINATION OF CARE STRATEGY IS CENTRALIZED CASE MANAGEMENT. CENTRALIZED CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES ARE AIMED AT HELPING CLIENTS CONNECT WITH MAINSTREAM SYSTEMS TO ACCESS THEIR SERVICES. SEVERAL ELEMENTS OF THIS SYSTEM ARE IN PLACE. FOR EXAMPLE, ALL PROGRAMS REPORTING TO THE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP OR FUNDED BY HUD'S MCKINNEY-VENTO FUNDS ARE USING THE SERVICEPOINT "HOMELESS MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM" (HMIS). THIS HMIS HAS THE CAPACITY TO SHARE CLIENT ASSESSMENT AND CASE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION. IN ADDITION, MULTIPLE AGENCIES LOCATED ON SITE AT CONTINUUM OF CARE FACILITIES, OFFER COORDINATED CASE MANAGEMENT. THIS MODEL HAS BEEN USED AT THE NEW YORK AVENUE HAC WHERE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY SERVICES AND DHS HAVE SERVED AS CASE MANAGEMENT AGENCIES IN PARTNERSHIP WITH DMH, DOES, DOH AND UNITY HEALTH CARE.

### **REDESIGN THE FAMILY SYSTEM**

THE SECOND SIGNATURE STRATEGY FOR *HOMELESS NO MORE* IS THE REDESIGN OF THE FAMILY SYSTEM. THE INITIAL COMPONENT OF THIS STRATEGY WILL BE THE TRANSFORMATION OF DC VILLAGE INTO AN

INTERIM SHORT-TERM FAMILY ASSESSMENT CENTER WITH A HOUSING FIRST FOCUS. ALL MAINSTREAM AGENCIES WILL PARTICIPATE ON SITE AND WILL BE INVOLVED IN ASSESSMENTS OF THE NEEDS OF THE ENTIRE FAMILY NOT JUST THE HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD. THE CENTER WILL CONDUCT ASSESSMENTS OF ALL FAMILIES IN THE SHELTER SYSTEM AND THE INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM WILL DEVELOP COMPREHENSIVE SERVICE PLANS TO BE IMPLEMENTED AT EACH PLACEMENT SITE ON THE CONTINUUM OF CARE.

### **NEW HOUSING**

THE THIRD SIGNATURE STRATEGY IS TO BRING ON LINE 600 NEW UNITS OF AFFORDABLE PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING THIS YEAR. THIS GOAL WILL BE ACHIEVED BY LEVERAGING SEVERAL FEDERALLY AND LOCALLY FUNDED HOUSING SUBSIDIES AS WELL AS THE \$10M FUND DESIGNATED FOR ACQUISITION, RENOVATION AND/OR DEVELOPMENT OF REAL PROPERTY. THE GOAL IS FOR 300 UNITS TO BE DESIGNATED FOR FAMILIES AND 300 FOR SINGLES. TO DATE 218 FAMILY UNITS AND 275 SINGLES UNITS HAVE BEEN BROUGHT ON LINE OR ARE IN PROGRESS.

THE \$10M/YEAR FUND IS BEING ADMINISTERED THROUGH THE HOUSING PRODUCTION TRUST FUND FROM WHICH \$4.5M WAS EARMARKED AND IS COMPLEMENTED BY \$5.5M IN CAPITAL APPROPRIATIONS. EIGHT OF THE REFERENCED FAMILY PROJECTS REPRESENTING 130 UNITS WERE FUNDED



THROUGH THE HPTF IN FY2005 AND 2006 WITH A TOTAL INVESTMENT TO DATE OF \$9,351,593 THAT LEVERAGES ANOTHER \$1,679,044 FROM HUD AND HFA, AS WELL AS A 100% HAP CONTRACT FOR ONE OF THE PROJECTS.

OTHER FAMILY UNITS ARE BEING FUNDED THROUGH THE DHS-FUNDED HOUSING FIRST AT FRONT DOOR PROGRAM (36 UNITS -- \$410,400); HUD'S SHELTER PLUS CARE PROGRAM (40 UNITS -- \$693,960); AND THE HUD AND DMH-FUNDED HOUSE OF RUTH PROGRAM HOPE RISING (12 UNITS -- \$1,028,184).

FOUR OF THE REFERENCED SINGLES PROJECTS REPRESENTING 67 UNITS WERE FUNDED THROUGH THE HPTF IN 2005 AND 2006 WITH A TOTAL INVESTMENT OF \$2,799,278, WITH AN APPLICATION PENDING. OTHER SINGLES UNITS ARE BEING FUNDED THROUGH HUD'S SHELTER PLUS CARE PROGRAM (18 UNITS -- \$183,600); THE HUD, DCHA, DMH AND DHS-FUNDED CHRONIC HOMELESS INITIATIVE (106 UNITS -- \$3,897,608); HUD'S SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PROGRAM (12 UNITS -- \$609,617); THE VETERANS' ADMINISTRATION'S IGNATIA HOUSE (12 UNITS -- \$411,428); DMH'S SCATTERED SITES DEVELOPMENT (34 UNITS -- \$4,065,000); AND THE HUD AND DMH-FUNDED CHRONICALLY HOMELESS SERIAL INEBRIATES PROGRAM (26 UNITS -- \$2,010,230).

#### **EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING**

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING OPTIONS ARE THE FOCUS OF THE FOURTH SIGNATURE STRATEGY. PERSONS WHO ARE HOMELESS WILL BE CONNECTED TO TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT SUCH AS THE DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT SERVICES' TRANSITIONAL EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM AND SO OTHERS MIGHT EAT'S CENTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAM. THIS STRATEGY WILL BE IMPLEMENTED BY:

- 1) CONNECTING THE HOUSING ASSISTANCE CENTER TO DOES' TRANSITIONAL EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM;
- 2) SITING DOES' VIRTUAL ONE-STOP CAREER CENTERS AT THE HOUSING ASSISTANCE CENTERS, APRA TREATMENT CENTERS AND THE FAMILY ASSESSMENT CENTERS;
- 3) ENCOURAGING SUPPORT FOR A LIVING WAGE ACT; AND
- 4) EXPLORING THE CREATION OF HOUSING SUBSIDIES WITH EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT SERVICES.

### **SUPPORTING RECOVERY FROM ADDICTION**

THE FIFTH SIGNATURE STRATEGY IS TO DECREASE ADDICTION AND SUPPORT RECOVERY AMONG THE HOMELESS POPULATION. THE ADDICTION, PREVENTION AND RECOVERY ADMINISTRATION ("APRA") HAS UNDERTAKEN SEVERAL INITIATIVES TO IMPLEMENT THIS STRATEGY. A HUMAN CARE GRANT AGREEMENT WAS ESTABLISHED WITH NEIGHBOR'S CONSEJO TO OPERATE A DAY TREATMENT AND INPATIENT TREATMENT PROGRAM. APRA ALSO IS FUNDING PROJECT ORION, WHICH

CONDUCTS SHELTER ASSESSMENTS AT THE NEW YORK AVENUE HAC. AND APRA PLANS TO EXPAND ITS SERVICES TO HOMELESS FAMILIES BY STARTING AN OUTPATIENT TREATMENT PROGRAM FOR FAMILIES AT D.C. VILLAGE AND ESTABLISHING A NEW RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT PROGRAM FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN. APRA ALSO WILL EXPLORE INCREASING SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE HAC'S.

### **DELIVERING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

THE DELIVERY OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IS THE FOCUS OF THE SIXTH SIGNATURE STRATEGY. BY INCREASING THE HOMELESS OUTREACH PROGRAM STAFF THE DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH WILL INCREASE ITS CAPACITY TO REACH HOMELESS PERSONS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS. THE SUPPORTED INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM AND THE HOUSING FIRST II PROGRAM WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE SUBSIDIZED HOUSING FOR CLIENTS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS. FINALLY, DMH HAS DEVELOPED AN AGREEMENT WITH THE DC HOUSING FINANCE AGENCY TO TRANSFER CAPITAL APPROPRIATIONS TO COVER THE COST OF BLENDING UNITS INTO LARGE PROJECTS DEVELOPED WITH BOND FINANCING, THEREBY MEETING DIXON DECREE REQUIREMENTS TO OFFER SUPPORTIVE HOUSING IN THE COMMUNITY.

### **DISCHARGE PLANNING**

THE SEVENTH STRATEGY FOCUSES ON THE DISCHARGE PLANNING COMMITTEE'S COMMITMENT TO CONTINUE TO DEVELOP STRATEGIES TO AVOID SHELTER PLACEMENT OF PATIENTS WHEN THEY ARE DISCHARGED FROM HOSPITALS, AS WELL AS YOUTH TIMING OUT OF FOSTER CARE AND FORMER PRISONERS REENTERING THE COMMUNITY. WE ARE PURSUING DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS TO DEVELOP A "FINISHING SCHOOL" PROJECT FOR YOUTH TIMING OUT OF FOSTER CARE AND ARE WORKING WITH EXISTING PROGRAMS FOR REENTRANTS, HELPING THEM TO DEVELOP SUPPORTIVE HOUSING.

#### **PRIORITIZING HOMELESS PROGRAMMING WITHIN FY2008 BUDGET**

OUR FINAL STRATEGY CALLS ON ALL PERTINENT AGENCIES – AS WELL AS ALL OTHERS INVOLVED IN THE BUDGET PROCESS – NOW AND IN THE FUTURE TO MAKE AN ONGOING COMMITMENT TO ENDING HOMELESSNESS BY 2014. YOU WILL SEE THAT COMMITMENT REFLECTED IN OUR CURRENT BUDGET AND WE TO BUILD ON THE PROGRESS MADE SO FAR – ONE YEAR AFTER FINALIZING THE *HOMELESS NO MORE* INITIATIVE.

#### **CONCLUSION**

THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE OUR IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY FOR *HOMELESS NO MORE*.